



Steve Troxler
Commissioner

**North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services**
Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Patricia K. Harris
Director

THE NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL WATER RESOURCES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

AgWRAP Review Committee

Wednesday, September 5, 2012: 1:30pm-4:00pm
NCDA&CS Agronomic Division Building in Raleigh and webinar

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Gary Higgins, Greg Hughes, Tom Ellis, Tom Hill, Daphne Cartner, Julie Henshaw, Cindy Safrit, Mitch Peele, Natalie Woolard, Vernon Cox, Chester Lowder

- I. Welcome and introductions
- II. Minutes from August 22, 2012 meeting were approved by consensus.
- III. PY2013 State Pond Application Cycle: \$450,000
 - \$425,000 from PY2013 appropriation + \$25,000 from unencumbered PY2012 pond contracts
- IV. Draft August 2012 preliminary pond site assessment form
 - Revised form reviewed by committee that developed the form, and changes were accepted.
 - We will still accept the previous form, but we will ask the districts to submit the additional pieces of information.
- V. Point values for ranking purposes
 - a. Refer to attached ranking form, attachment A.
- VI. Draft PY2013 application
 - Form will be available through Google docs – for an online submittal that will tabulate data.
 - Will require the following attachments:
 - 1 page form for signatures of applicant and district board
 - Preliminary pond site assessment form
 - Outputs of the Water Needs Assessment Tool for NC
 - Volunteers needed to review and rank applications – will have access to the online submissions
 - Application deadline November 16, 2012
 - Applications ranked by December 14, 2012
 - Applications approved at January 6, 2013 Soil and Water Conservation Commission meeting

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VII. NC Ag Advancement Consortium proposal

VIII. Mitch Peele provided a review on this proposal. NCFB is working with the AgWRAP Review Committee and the NC Rural Center's Agricultural Advancement Consortium on a farmer survey on water use needs. The 18 items below were suggested by the committee in July and will be rewritten into questions. Tom Ellis, Vernon Cox, Pat Harris, Ed Emory, Herb Vanderberry and Julie Henshaw will meet on Monday, September 10th to work on finalizing the survey, including formatting the questions.

1. When identifying needs related to irrigation, determine whether the farmer is currently irrigating. (i.e, is this for new or existing irrigation?)
2. Does the farmer need assistance in getting access to water supplies? (connecting to water systems, etc.)
3. Does the farmer need to shift to more efficient water systems? (specific)
4. Determine what economic benefit the AgWRAP assistance will have in creating jobs, improving income of the farmer, etc.
5. Identify the farmer's current challenges (e.g., live in Central Coastal Plain CUA).
6. Identify the farmer's future challenges on availability.
7. Need to have farmer specify size of well, capacity of pond, etc.
8. Format of survey should be simple to complete, using check boxes, multiple choice, etc.
9. Ask about challenges in accessing technical assistance (pond design, etc.)
10. Document current efforts/practices the farmer uses to increase efficiency. (use of water sensors, meters, other efficiency measures)
11. Is the farmer using innovative systems currently?
12. Identify innovative systems/practices that the farmer desires to use.
13. Does the farmer have a water resource management plan?
14. Is the farmer using GPS/GIC technology when irrigating?
15. Are they utilizing soil maps?
16. Where does the farmer get their information on irrigation practices, systems, etc.?
17. Ask farmer to identify areas in which efficiency improvement is desired/needed.
18. Ask farmer to identify efficiency practices that they would be interested in.

IX. Rulemaking

Before beginning rule making process, division staff will schedule time to meet with RRC staff to discuss how the CCAP allocation rule could be revised to have more flexibility due to limited state appropriations for the program. The lessons learned from that meeting could be taken into consideration when drafting AgWRAP rules.

X. Set next meeting date: doodle poll for October

Agenda items include: cultural resources review criteria – division will provide written guidance for districts regarding backhoe investigations by the Sept 19th Commission meeting.